

Ballona Wetlands REIR Document Index

Revised Environmental Impact Report

Critical Engineering Analysis

■ CRITICAL ENGINEERING DISCREPANCY

21% Flood Capacity Error Identified:

- **CDFW Uses:** 68,000 cubic feet per second (cfs)
- **Correct Specification:** 82,000 cfs terminal / 72,000 cfs upstream
- **Authoritative Source:** 1979 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Report
- **Error Magnitude:** 21% underestimation of required flood capacity

Overview

This document index catalogs the Revised Environmental Impact Report (REIR) materials for the Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project. The project has been under development for over two decades and faces critical engineering and regulatory challenges, including fundamental discrepancies in flood control specifications.

Key Agencies & Organizations

- **CDFW** - California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Project Lead)
- **USACE** - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Flood Control Authority)
- **LACFCD** - Los Angeles County Flood Control District
- **Coastal Commission** - California Coastal Commission (Regulatory Oversight)
- **Regional Water Board** - Regional Water Quality Control Board

Primary REIR Documents

1. Authoritative Engineering Specifications

- **1979 USACE Ballona Creek Report** - Establishes terminal capacity of 82,000 cfs and upstream capacity of 72,000 cfs

- **Status:** *Archived on Internet Archive*

2. CDFW Project Documentation

- **REIR Volume 1** - Project Description and Environmental Analysis
- **REIR Volume 2** - Technical Appendices and Supporting Studies
- **REIR Volume 3** - Comments and Responses
- **Issue:** **Uses 68,000 cfs specification throughout**

3. Regulatory Correspondence

F9b-7-2024-corresp.pdf - Coastal Commission correspondence documenting 68,000 cfs vs 82,000 cfs discrepancy

- **URL:** documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2024/7/F9b/F9b-7-2024-corresp.pdf
- **Key Finding:** USACE and LACFCD acknowledge use of 68,000 cfs; County privately expresses doubts about validity

4. Public Meeting Records

December 18, 2025 Regional Water Quality Control Board Meeting - Public discussion of 68,000 cfs issue

- **Video:** youtube.com/watch?v=5CUhOLXYEgI
- **Content:** CDFW criticized for project stagnation; flood capacity discrepancy raised publicly

Legal & Regulatory Actions

- **May 2023 Court Ruling** - EIR decertified for using incorrect flood control parameters
- **Section 408 Permit** - Army Corps federal permit blocked due to flood capacity issues
- **CEQA Compliance Issues** - Potential violations related to project segmentation and inadequate environmental review

Project Evolution

- **Original Scope:** 566 acres of wetlands restoration
- **Current Scope ('Sequences 1 and 2'):** Approximately 60 acres
- **Reduction:** 89% reduction in scope without proper environmental review

- **Issue:** Project segmentation may violate CEQA requirements for comprehensive environmental review

Critical Technical Issues

1. Flood Capacity Specifications

The fundamental discrepancy between CDFW's 68,000 cfs and the authoritative 1979 USACE specification of 82,000 cfs terminal / 72,000 cfs upstream represents a 21% underestimation of required flood capacity. This error has cascading effects throughout the project design and environmental analysis.

2. Lack of Viable Tidal Water Source

Project design lacks adequate tidal water source for restoration areas, calling into question the viability of achieving stated restoration objectives.

3. Sea Level Rise Projections

Current sea level rise projections make limited restoration sequences (60 acres) unsustainable over project lifetime. Original 566-acre scope may be necessary for climate resilience.

4. Federal Permitting Blocked

Section 408 permit from Army Corps of Engineers remains blocked, preventing any federal authorization for modifications to existing flood control infrastructure.

Document Archive Information

- **Repository:** Internet Archive (archive.org)
- **Collection:** TLM Archive - Section 4: Ballona Wetlands Environmental Documentation
- **Archivist:** Tom McMahon
- **Date Compiled:** January 2026
- **Purpose:** Systematic documentation of engineering discrepancies, regulatory failures, and institutional dysfunction spanning two decades of project development

Research & Educational Value

This document index and associated archive materials provide primary source documentation for:

- **Engineering Analysis:** Case study in critical specification errors and their propagation through large-scale environmental projects

- **Environmental Policy:** Analysis of CEQA compliance issues, project segmentation, and environmental review adequacy
- **Institutional Dysfunction:** Documentation of regulatory agency coordination failures and institutional stagnation
- **Wetlands Restoration:** Technical and policy challenges in urban wetlands restoration projects
- **Flood Control:** Interaction between flood control infrastructure and ecological restoration objectives

*For complete documentation and source materials, visit:
archive.org/details/ballona-reir-document-index*

Part of the TLM Archive - Section 4: Ballona Wetlands Environmental Documentation